

Poverty Alleviation of Rural People through Good Governance in Bangladesh

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Abstract

The governance is a vital issue especially for a developing country like Bangladesh which affects every sector of development. Corruption, inefficient service delivery, weak policy setting, and limited participation of various stakeholders in decision making have a negative impact on the rural poor. However, the main reason of poverty retaining in Bangladesh is seen in bad governance, which comprises widespread corruption, non-transparency and non-accountability of public policy making. Good governance is considered to bring in a powerful change in the condition of the poor. The main objective of this article is to explore the ways of poverty alleviation through good governance in Bangladesh. It also finds out the present situation of poverty in Bangladesh and determines the link between good governance and poverty alleviation. This article used documentary analysis and, in particular, content analysis as a research method in order to disclose appearance of good governance agenda representing ways of addressing poverty alleviation. This study finds out the four indicators of good governance which directly related to poverty alleviation in Bangladesh: accountability, transparency, participation and predictability. This study suggests that publicly available information, access of the poor to basic services of government, budget transparency, expenditure, verdicts of courts and tribunals, responsive local government, grass root democracy, and anti-corruption are effective instruments for every sector development which can alleviate poverty in terms of any dimension. It contributes new lense to the existing literature regarding linkages between good governance and poverty alleviation.

Keywords: Poverty reduction; Alleviation; Rural people; Good governance; Bangladesh.



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1. Introduction

Bangladesh is a densely populated nations in the world where about 13% of of the total population are living below the national poverty line of US \$2 per day (Misha and Sulaiman M, 2016). Though the poverty alleviation rate is increasing but still the rate is a dangerous level in some rural areas. According to BBS (2011), about 17% people are living below the poverty line. Since Bangladesh is a village oriented country so about 80% people are living in village areas (World Bank, 2013). Lots of individuals living in village areas where basic public services are not available like low access to education, health and lack of roads and markets. About 35 % of people in villages are under the poverty line. Whereas 21 % urban people are below the poverty line. The resource poor villagers have food insecurity, no land and assets, are often uneducated, and may also experience serious illnesses or disabilities. Another 29% of the villsgers are considered as moderately poor. Though they have a small piece of land and some other assets but not enough to meet their dietary and nutritious requirement. They are actually vulnerable to natural disastera and climatic variability. Generally the women headed households are more vulnerable than male headed household in the rural areas. They usually face gender discrimination, low access to the political participation, decision making and earning sources. People residing in towns are enjoying a better quality of life with power, gas, and water (Asian Development Bank ADB, 2016). Though some cities are still in dirty situation and possesses some slums where poor people are living. In April 2016, the Asian Development Financial Institution approximated of the 157.90 million people residing in Bangladesh, 31.5% stay under the national poverty line (Asian Development Bank ADB, 2016). (Begum, 2013) mentioned that ensuring the good government has become the most significant challenge for community management in the new millennium all over the whole world, especially for the developing nations. A sound community management system acts as an essential propelling force for accomplishing good government. Both the stars of community management - governmental decision makers and municipal servants - are directly involved in the procedure of accomplishing as well as guaranteeing good government. At the same time, the current management lifestyle has an immense impact on the stars that perform a significant part as aspects in the procedure. Bangladesh is not an exception. The executive cultures have become key elements that impact the stars a lot and thus perform a significant part in the procedure of proper government. Khan (2009) reported that poverty

alleviation mainly focuses on economic development, income distribution, and distribution changes. Governance has an ability to influence and contribute to economic development and income distribution. The prominent market-enhancing government model seeks to improve the performance of marketplaces through ‘good governance’ changes, apparently to enhance development. ‘Pro-poor’ good government changes maintain to improve scale and performance of service delivery to inadequate people. The best government approach to improving development is disputed. Neither theory nor evidence strongly supports the plausibility of significantly decreasing poverty through the good government agenda. Alternative government approaches for addressing poverty are contrasted favorably with the currently prominent paradigm in Bangladesh. Good government is supposed to ensure civil, political, financial, social, and cultural privileges. The state must provide a framework of law and regulation within which individuals can exercise their rights and where these conditions are not in place, it is inadequate people who pay the price. Bangladesh is a nation where poverty is pervasive and good government is rare. Due to consider the importance of the issue, this study attempts to explore the effectiveness of good governance for alleviating poverty in Bangladesh, drawing on relevant theories and empirical evidence from the country’s various programs and documents. It also determines the link between good governance and poverty alleviation.

The remainder of the article is organized as the following section presents a concise overview of the theoretical underpinnings on the interconnectedness between good governance and reducing poverty. The third section delineates the present conditions of poverty in Bangladesh. The fourth section outlines the recent poverty trends and good governance in Bangladesh. It then examines the linkage of good governance and poverty. The final section summarizes the effectiveness of ensuring good governance and provides some policy recommendations.

2. Methodology

Qualitative approach used in this study. Theoretical methodology was used based on systematically collected data and information. This study used primary and secondary data. The primary source was the constitution of Bangladesh. Renowned databases like web of science, sciencedirect, springerlink, banglajol and ideas has been used to collect latest information and data. Beside this systematic documentary analysis included official desk report, various project report, and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) report for substantiate the argument. This article acknowledged all the information sources directly or indirectly. It was conducted by the research team in November 2017 to January 2018.

3. Review of the Related Literature

The idea of “governance” can be monitored to the human civilization. Simply "governance" means selection and applying the procedure (Moore, 2001). Governance is term which is frequently used in some situations like in business, international case, national case and local cases. Since governance is the procedure for decision-making and applying, an research of governance concentrates on stars involved in decision-making and applying the choices (Laporte, 2000). The government is the main acting professional among other stars in governance, and municipal community performs an part thereby. There is no consistent definition of proper government rather recommending the requirements to warrant the stage of proper government. Good government means competent control of the country’s resources and matters in a manner that is open, clear, accountable, reasonable and sensitive to people’s needs. According to World Bank (1992), good governance refers as “*the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development*”. The World Bank and other multilateral growth banks on good government address financial organizations and community industry control, including visibility and responsibility, regulating change, and community industry skills and management.

Kamal (2014) indicated that target-based community back-up applications are experiencing difficulties as a powerful community policy for Bangladesh in liberating many individuals from weaknesses and excessive poverty because of management complexness, heavy cost, great water leaks, mistargeting, weak government, less visibility and responsibility, governmental catch, and crime in the implementation of program; these approaches rather strengthen rent-seeking patron-clientelism and build a great variety of intermediaries. That is why, it is important to upgrade the back-up applications to get better findings and make sure their efficiency. Hassan (2002) suggested that the inadequate government is an obstacle to the execution of pro-poor guidelines, the poverty level gets. He also outlined a strategy for financial resurgence and pro-poor guidelines which will hopefully build a positive impact on job creation, prices of basic products and reduction of poverty. Good government is a real drive behind a country’s growth. It defends the human privileges, guarantees the rights, preserves law an order and provides equivalent opportunities to the public. It provides the fruits of progress and growth to one and all. Contribution, visibility, and idea of law, are some requirements of proper government. It is a vital aspect at all levels of community and condition. It makes the system of the condition efficient and efficient. Good government is not well based in Bangladesh due to some difficulties. Municipal community is trying to concentrate the idea for sleek growth and balance of a nation. Because individuals of the nation enjoy equivalent privileges where there is great government. Unprivileged live easily and exercise their religious beliefs. Therefore, a well being condition can only exist if there is great government. Good Governance has become a parameter to show the idea of law, democracy, and stage of growth. It brings a standard in the entertainment of civil, governmental, financial and community privileges of the resident the nation. There are several things to make sure the entertainment of citizens’ privileges, but Good Governance is at the top of them. Because good government is a natural phrase includes many aspects to be assured in the nation. There is a well-cited quote by UN official Kofi Annan that “*good government is perhaps the most important aspect in eliminating poverty and promoting development*”. The word good government is being

progressively used in growth literary works (World Bank). Major contributors and international financial organizations are progressively giving aid and loans with a condition of ensuring good governance. The absence of proper governance has vitiated the core performing of constitutional privileges of the resident (Sulaiman and Misha, 2016). The trend of poverty in Bangladesh is presented in Table 1.

Table-1. Trend of Income Poverty in Bangladesh

	2010	2005	Annual Change (%) (2005 to 2010)	2000	Annual Change (%) (2000 to 2005)
Head Count Index					
National	31.5	40.0	-4.67	48.9	-3.9
Urban	21.3	28.4	-4.28	35.2	-4.2
Rural	35.2	43.8	-5.59	52.3	-3.5
Poverty Gap					
National	6.5	9.0	-6.30	12.8	-6.80
Urban	4.3	6.5	-7.93	9.1	-6.51
Rural	7.4	9.8	-5.46	13.7	-6.48
Squared Poverty Gap					
National	2.0	2.9	-7.16	4.6	-8.81
Urban	1.3	2.1	-9.15	3.3	-8.64
Rural	2.2	3.1	-6.63	4.9	-8.75

Source: BBS, Household Income and Expenditure Surveys HIES (Households (2010))

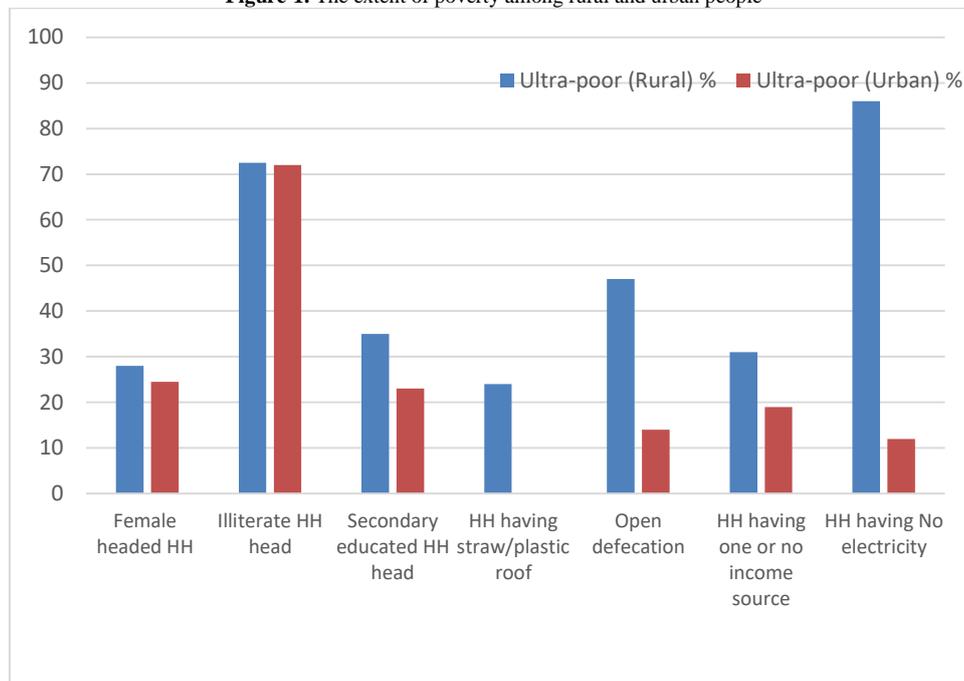
With 1/4 millennium of continual poverty reduction, the interest amount of excessive poverty in the globe is reduced than ever. International excessive poverty rate has dropped by about 75% of what it was in 1990 (37%) (Ferreira et al., 2015). Much of this improvement was motivated by the constant financial increase Eastern Japan, and to a smaller degree, in South Japan. Progress in Latina America and the Caribbean on the other hand has bogged down down while the discount rates in excessive poverty remain typically and continually low in Sub-Saharan African-american. It would be difficult to reach the objective of eliminating excessive poverty by 2030 through development alone as it would require speeding up development prices to unmatched levels for most of the nations while keeping inequality the same (Yoshida et al., 2014). The idea of ultra-poverty signifies houses residing far below the national poverty range, there is no consistent purpose of ultra-poverty in Bangladesh. There are sometimes differences made centered on immediate calories actions. According to family income expenses study of 2010, individuals taking less than 1805 and 1600 Kcal a day are described as hard-core inadequate and ultra-poor respectively. Sen and Ali (2015) focused on some terms of poverty such as extremely poor, poorest of the poor, hardcore poor, and ultra-poor for categorizing based on their extent of poverty. The real per household intake expenses from 2005 to 2010 improved at an average yearly amount of 16.9 percent, with better pay of increase in non-urban places compared to city. This implies that the financial conditions and earnings of non-urban people, especially the inadequate, have enhanced considerably as a result of the pro-poor and pro-rural guidelines of the government (Sen and Ali, 2015). Despite this improvement, 17.6% of the inhabitants of the country was residing below the national reduced poverty range truly with much greater focus of poverty in non-urban places (Table 2).

Table-2. Decline in poverty headcount ratio (by lower poverty line) between 1991 and 2010

	National	Rural	Urban
1991-92	41.1	43.8	24.0
1995-96	35.2	39.5	13.7
2000	34.3	37.9	20.0
2005	25.1	28.6	14.6
2010	17.6	21.1	7.7

Source: BBS (2011)

The extent of poverty in Bangladesh is higher than neighbouring countries irrespective of short-term case and long term cases. Table 2 showed that the trend of poverty reduction is positive which meant that the extent of poverty is decreasing gradually with time. The major dimensions of poverty of the people of Bangladesh are shown in Figure 1.

Figure-1. The extent of poverty among rural and urban people

Source: Sen and Ali (2015)

4. Essentials of Good Governance

4.1. Elements of Good Governance

Good government has eight major features. They are - participatory, agreement focused, responsible, clear, sensitive, efficient and effective, reasonable and comprehensive and follow the concept of law. It guarantees reducing crime and considering the unprivileged opinions in the decision-making process. For example, government may be described the way socio-economic energy is worked out in handling matters within a group. However, sense problem is increased if only the results of laughable government are considered or signs are developed with particular focus to rationalize a conceptual viewpoint. For example, one may associate government to the exercise of rights and the promotion of individual rights; some may suggest governmental participation; while some others in the name of concern for the poor and the insecure may over highlight some public signs. The Globe Standard bank describes Governance as control over State energy with focus on the economical aspect of the control. Oriental Standard bank and other International Financial Companies highlight certain components which correspond with growth, growth, and poverty. The danger in such plan motivated meaning is that it might neglect the passions, concerns and the mind of inadequate people. Probably, it is useful to intricate purpose of government by the evaluating important components of proper government. The comparison of explanations employed by Globe Standard bank, Int-Am DB, UNDP, and ADB is given in Table 3. It is also sensitive to the present and future needs of group. The fundamental elements of good governance are in below.

4.1.1. Participation

People's participation is a key element of proper governance. People's contribution can be either direct or direct to the institution for making proper decision. Good governance does not necessarily mean that the most insecure in group considerably participants opinion. Contribution needs to be informed and arranged which needs independence of organization and appearance on the one side and a great municipal group.

4.1.2. Rule of Law

Good government needs fair legal frameworks to implement the law impartially. It also needs full security of individual privileges, particularly those of unprivileged. Neutral administration of laws and regulations needs a private judiciary and a neutral and incorruptible law enforcement officials.

4.1.3. Transparency

Transparency indicates the choices creating and administration procedures are in the manner that follows policies. It also signifies that details are easily available and accessible to people who might be affected by the policies and their administration. It includes provides enough details in easy to understand forms and media.

4.1.4. Responsiveness

Good government needs that institutions and procedures try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable period of time. Public administrator should be more sincere and interact to local elected representative for reducing poverty at rural level.

4.1.5. Consensus-Oriented

Good governance needs arbitration of the different passions in group to reach a wide agreement in group on what is in the best choice of the participants and how this may be possible. It also needs a wide and long-term viewpoint on what is required for maintaining individual growth and process of achieving the goals. The understanding of the traditional, social and public situations of a given group or group is also aspect of agreement alignment (Alam and Hasina, 2014).

4.1.6. Equity and Inclusiveness

A society's betterment depends on guaranteeing that all people think that they have a part of it and do not avoid to participate from the group. Inclusiveness needs all groups, but especially the most insecure to enhance or maintain their livelihood activities.

4.1.7. Effectiveness and Efficiency

Good government signifies that procedures and institutions produce results that meet the needs of group while taking the best use of sources that they can. The concept of performance while proper government also includes the maintainable use of natural sources and the security of the environment (Iftekharuzzaman, 2007).

4.1.8. Accountability

Accountability is a key tool for effective governance. Not only government institutions but also the private industry and municipal group organizations must be responsible to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. Who is responsible to whom differs were based upon on whether choices or actions taken are internal or exterior to an company or company. Generally, company or an company is responsible for any hindrance caused by its policy and action and this responsibility is enforceable without visibility and the concept of law (Alam and Hasina, 2014).

Table-3. Comparison of Essential Elements of "Good Governance"

Comparison of Essential Elements of "Good Governance" World Bank	Int-Am DB	UNDP	ADB
Transparency: Open policy from legislature	Comprehensiveness : political and judicial institutions	Effectiveness: Cost-effectiveness of governance	Accountability
Accountability: Executive's actions	Transparency: oversight of public policy dialogue	Responsiveness: Sensitiveness of stakeholders	Transparency
Predictability of Policy: Professional ethos in bureaucracy	Competition: Free market	Consensus: intervention on specific cases	Predictability
Rule of Law: For all kinds of institutions	Social Equity: reform and income distribution Efficiency: governance cost-effectiveness	Long-term Vision: Development of a long-term vision on human development	Participation

Source: Adapted from (Bhatti, 2002).

4.2. Constitutional Provisions of Bangladesh for Good Governance

4.2.1. Equal Participation

Excellent government needs contribution of both men and ladies in every industry of lifestyle. The constitutional conditions in Bangladesh also require this part. Content 27 provides that all people are equivalent before the law and have entitlement to equivalent security of the law. Content 28(2) provides that Females shall have equivalent privileges with men in all areas of the Condition and community lifestyle. Content 29 refers to that there shall equate privileges of chance for all people in regard of career or office in the service of the Republic (Alam and Hasina, 2014).

4.2.2. Independence of Judiciary

Judiciary loves full freedom under good government. The structure of Bangladesh also assures the problem. Content 22 of the Constitution says that The Condition shall make sure the separating of the judiciary from the professional body parts of the Condition.

4.2.3. Supremacy of Constitution

Good government promotes the supremacy of the structure. The structure of Bangladesh recommends very totally for constitutional supremacy. Content 7 of the Constitution provides a serious appearance of the will of the people and the superior law of the republic, and if any other law is irregular with this Constitution shall be gap.

4.2.4. Rule of Law

Good government preserves the concept of law in the nation. The preamble of Bangladesh structure says for concept of law. It provides that it shall be a essential aim of the Condition to understand a community free from exploitation in which the concept of law, essential individual privileges and freedom, equivalent privileges, and rights, governmental, financial and community, will be properly secured for all people.

4.2.5. Democracy

Good government security officers democracy and assures governmental balance in the nation. Content 11 of the Constitution declares about democracy. The Content provides that the Republic shall be a democracy in which essential individual privileges and liberties and regard for the pride and worth of a persons person shall be assured (Alam and Hasina, 2014).

4.2.6. Social Equality

Equal submission of sources among the federating models from the has to be made possible in a nation having good government. There should be community equivalent privileges for all people. Content 19 of the Constitution provides that The Condition shall try to make sure equivalent privileges of chance to all people. The Condition shall follow effective actions to get rid of community and financial inequality between man and man and to make sure the reasonable submission of prosperity among people, and of possibilities in order to obtain a consistent level of financial growth throughout the Republic.

4.3. Challenges for Good Governance in Bangladesh

There are a number of challenges to ensure good governance in Bangladesh. The major challenges are as follows:

4.3.1. Freedom of Judiciary

The deficiency of separate judiciary is also restricting Bangladesh's way towards accomplishing excellent governance. Late rights is due to inadequate governance. Justice delayed is rights declined, which straight leads to to the powerlessness of the inadequate. Unskilled most judges have also extremely affected the appropriate management of rights, hence made the judiciary poor (Shelley, 2000). When the issues of the public are not redressed, they make use of aggressive methods to their issues. This state of condition results in the destruction of the concept of law.

4.3.2. Economic Disparity

There is a great financial difference. The wealthy are getting better, and the inadequate are becoming lesser. Due to the delicate economic system, FDI is reducing on account of terrorism and governmental uncertainty. Another significant problem is Bangladesh's huge debt and its ongoing dependancy on financial aid.

4.3.3. Lack of Accountability

Accountability that is the key component of proper governance does not have in our nation. No one in our nation seems to consider him accountable to the law. Everyone whatever unlawful he does believes it as his right. It is a sort of flood that is engulfing our nation and providing increase to many issues.

4.3.4. Corruption

Corruption has become widespread in our universe. It has become so common that no one from office employees to high authorities is free from this condition. Visibility International (TI) has rated Bangladesh in ten most damaged countries in the world. Crime affects the economic system by increasing deal costs. It also depresses financial development by decreasing community financial commitment (Rahman and Azizuddin, 1996). Only a part of the amount of price range is invested on community tasks. The rest is embezzled by governance functionaries and companies. It occurs when administrators have monocontrol over government resources and it becomes a major obstacle to poverty alleviation (Klitgaard, 1988).

4.3.5. Mismanagement in Execution Process

Mismanagement of resources and government's inability to sustain the prices of primary products is improving rising prices and poverty. Poverty mashed individuals are further mashed with rising prices. Buying power is reducing day by day and others are incapable to make their both hands fulfill (Alan and Stephen, 1998). Feed is getting beyond their hands. Along with it, imbalanced submission of harvested area, unjust submission of income and improving human inhabitants are also accountable for this situation.

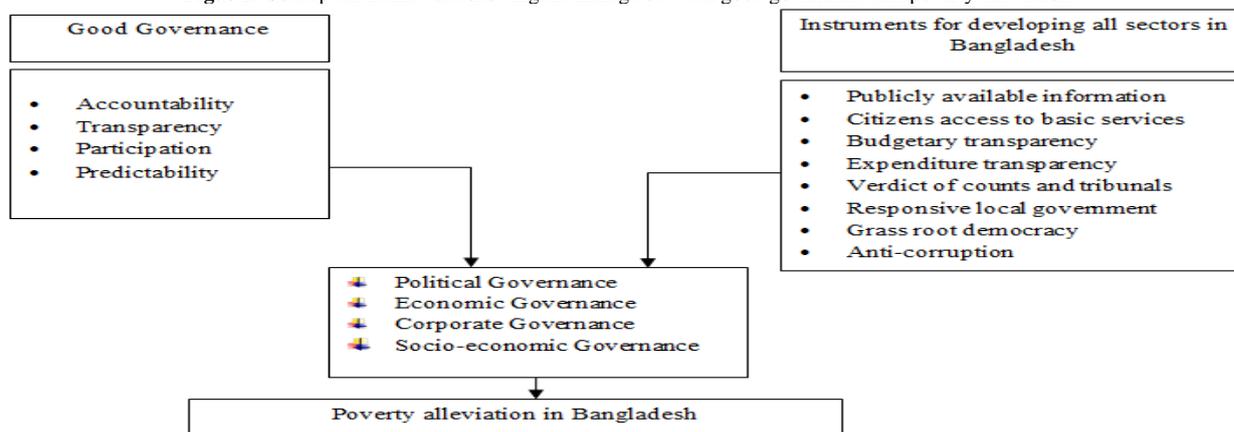
4.3.6. Poverty and Unemployment

Poverty and deficiency of employment are forcing our nation into the swamp of uneducated. Because of poverty, the inadequate cannot manage to deliver their children to educational institutions. And due to deficiency of employment, many individuals think, "What is the benefit of that knowledge that cannot provide any decent income."

5. Interrelationship Between Poverty and Good Governance

The general thought is like that bad governance leads to poverty. Only so-called governance is not sufficient for poverty reduction. If the guidelines and development are not pro-poor, poverty would rise even in the existence of so-called governance. Whereas, a number of nations with inadequate governance record have been able to achieve higher development and poverty. The four main aspects of excellent governance which carefully related to poverty relief are responsibility, contribution, of a routine, and visibility. It is generally suggested that the contribution of inadequate individuals the decision-making procedure is difficult to start with and an increase in poverty decreases the expectation. The inadequate weary in the governmental procedure inducing the reduction of possession and contribution. Governance is not the remedy for all evils. It is not the only cause of poverty in Bangladesh nor can excellent governance alone remove it. Governance issues have been created by a community structure which by itself reduce poverty (Figure 2).

Figure-2. Conceptual framework showing the linkage between good governance and poverty alleviation



Sebudubudu (2010) suggested that excellent governance in Botswana assisted growth and affected favorably on poverty and balance, to this level, this has been a sensitive democracy. It is recognized that the excellent governance strategy to growth is part of the overall new governance model which is growing lately in reaction to the modifying part of the state in regards to growth (Shylendra, 2004). For creating nations, excellent governance is a necessary condition for growing their ability to earn money and decrease poverty in the future. Good governance also increases financial performance and decreases deal costs through the effective application of the concept of law, visibility in governance and business management, and responsibility for every organization and individual in community. To the level that excellent government catalyzes municipal community to increase the rate of physical and human capital build up, it can also help to decrease creating countries' dependancy and weeknesses, and even improve the effect of the financial weeknesses. Only increasing income is not enough for poverty alleviation. All aspects of poverty should be addressed by empowerment and increasing opportunities of political, economic and social aspects of the rural poor (Blaxall, 2000; Eid, 2000). Evidence shows that Botswana get achievement to reducing poverty by attributing good governance (Holm, 2000; Sebudubudu, 2010; Theobald and Williams, 1999; Tsie, 1996). Sebudubudu (2010) argued that good governance promoted development and reduce poverty and instability by introducing responsive government in Botswana.

6. Recommendations for Policy Implicaion

The findings of the study suggest following recommendations which should be undertaken by the government for making effective policies and ensured effective implementation for poverty alleviation in Bangladesh.

6.1. Balance of Power and Resource Mobilization

The government of Bangladesh should be ensured the balance of power among all the government institutions so that they can be done their activities properly. It will help to functioning properly of the governmental machinery. Natural resources should be equally distributed to all the poverty prone areas in Bangladesh.

6.2. Justice for All

Justice is an essential partb of good governance. It should be cheap and quickly driven so that all people can be benefitted from it. It should be equal for all irrespective of class, creed and religion. A more efficient public services should be ensured for all through developing various delivery channel.

6.3. Economic Policies

The traditional economic policies should be revised by emphasizing agricultural and individual sections for increasing production and attraction to investment. The government expenditure should be minimized by downsizing the administrative set-up which will help to invest money for poverty alleviation programs and reducing debt burden.

6.4. Ensuring Accountability

All the institutions of government should be accountable through legislation. It should be covered from top to bottom level for effective use of resources and manpower. The decision making of government and public institutions should be transparent, predictable and accountable to general people.

6.5. Active Political Culture

It is necessary to practice an ideal political system which encourages inputs from civil society. Electoral administration should be impartial and credible for stabilizing political environment. The administrative institutions should be strengthened to capable them for poverty alleviation. Rule of law should be ensured for protecting gender equity, personal and civil rights. The political system should be more participative so that people have access to participate at this process.

6.6. Public Services for All

Basic public services like food, shelter, treatment, education, infrastructure etc should be ensured by the government at the rural level and poverty prone areas so that people can be benefitted from it. Government can advise non-government organizations and private sectors to come forward for providing some basic services at the poverty prone areas of the country.

6.7. Decentralization of Power and Combating with Corruption

The administrative power should be decentralized through administrative reform for ensuring power exercise at all levels and reducing corruption. Local government should be active for proper implementation of poverty alleviation programs by involving rural people. Corruption should be controlled by the intervention of the top level administration even at the grass root level.

The corporate social responsibility or good corporate governance may be the main source for poverty alleviation. Because there are so many private companies working in Bangladesh, they can provide a fixed percentage of their profit as a corporate social responsibility which will help to alleviate the poverty of rural poor people.

7. Conclusion

Good governance is an essential tool for poverty alleviation in Bangladesh. The planning and policy formulation of the government of Bangladesh is enough but its implementation is very difficult due to lack of accountability, transparency, corruption, nepotism etc, If we can ensure good governance especially accountability, transparency, participation and predictability, poverty will be alleviated, This article has demonstrated an important link between good governance and poverty alleviation through examining the context of good governance in Bangladesh. This article also suggests that democratic government with decentralization is necessary because so that rural people can get benefit especially for alleviating poverty. So, the principles of good governance should be translated into practice for ensuring the better life of the rural poor in Bangladesh.

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